

## Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8641

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 7947

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PEPR, MNUC, MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: REPROCESSING: NEWSOME DISCUSSION WITH AGHA SHAHI

REF: STATE 205550

1. WE HAVE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON AGHA SHAHI'S CONVERSATION  
WITH UNDERSECRETARY NEWSOM, AUGUST 11 (REFTEL):

--AS PREVIOUS EMBASSY REPORTING HAS INDICATED, NO GOVT  
OF PAKISTAN CAN MAKE PUBLIC ASSURANCES IT HAS RENOUNCED  
REPROCESSING. WE HAD ONCE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE,  
ALBEIT VERY DIFFICULT, FOR GOP TO GIVE US PRIVATE ASSURANCES  
BUT EVENTS OF PAST TEN DAYS MAKE THAT OPTION EXTREMELY  
UNLIKELY.

--PUBLICITY GENERATED HERE BY REUTERS STORY ON SUSPENSION  
OF NEW AID COMMITMENTS HAS FORCED ALL POLITICAL LEADERS  
TO GO ON RECORD UNCOMPROMISINGLY IN FAVOR OF REPROCESSING  
PLANT AND IN OPPOSITION TO U.S. PRESSURE ON THIS ISSUE.  
NO GOVT OFFICIAL OR POLITICAL LEADER ASSOCIATED WITH THE  
GOVT WULD NOW DARE RUN RISK OF OFFERING PRIVATE  
ASSURANCES WHICH MIGHT SUBSEQUENTLY BE MADE PUBLIC.

--AS ECONOMY CONTINUES TO FALTER AND GEN. ZIA FAILS TO  
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GENERATE ANY WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR HIS MILITARY REGIME,  
IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT HE OR HIS ASSOCIATES WILL  
CONTEMPLATE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ASSURANCES. ZIA'S EFFORTS  
TO GENERATE NEW SUPPORT BY FORMATION OF A CIVILIAN  
CABINET HAVE YET TO YIELD ANY APPREICABLE RESULTS AND ARE  
UNLIKELY TO DO SO IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

--AS ZIA FACES HIS GREATEST CHALLENGE IN WEEKS AHEAD, E.E., HIS DECISION ON THE FATE OF BHUTTO, HE CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO WEAKEN HIS INTERNAL POSITION FURTHER BY GIVING ANY HINT THAT HE IS LESS DEDICATED TO REPROCESSING THAN HIS ARCH RIVAL BHUTTO.

--IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THE MOST WE CAN HOPE FOR ARE PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT LEAVE OPTIONS OPEN (I.E., ARE NOT RPT NOT CATEGORICAL THAT REPROCESSING PLANT WILL BE COMPLETED). SUCH STATEMENTS WILL AT LEAST LEAVE OPTION OPEN TO US OF PERSUADING GOP THAT BENEFITS OF REJUVENATED RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. OUTWEIGH ADVANTAGES OF POSITIVE STEPS TOWARD PROLIFERATION.

--SHAHI WAS QUITE RIGHT IN NOTING THAT WHATEVER OUR POLITICAL CONTACTS MAY SAY PRIVATELY ABOUT FOOLISHNESS OF GOP REPROCESSING CAPER (AND A FEW HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED IT AS A MISTAKE) NONE CAN BE COUNTED TO SAY ANYTHING PUBLICLY THAT WOULD QUESTION IMPORTANCE OF REPROCESSING FACILITY FOR PAKISTAN.

--WE RECOGNIZE DIFFICULTIES FLAGGED BY ZABLOCKI AND GLENN IN PERSUADING CONGRESS THAT RENEWAL OF ASSISTANCE IS VALID IN THE ABSENCE OF ASSURANCES FROM PAKISTAN. MAJOR POINT WHICH WE BELIEVE SHOULD BE MADE IS THAT IN ABSENCE OF VIABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH US, GOP WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY  
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TRY TO PURSUE A NUCLEAR OPTION. HOWEVER, IF WE RENEW ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND EXPAND OUR RELATIONSHIP IN MEANINGFUL WAYS (E.G., MORE MILITARY SALES), WE AT LEAST STAND A CHANCE OF CONVINCING GOP THAT A NON-NUCLEAR FUTURE IS IN ITS OWN BEST INTEREST. AND WE OF COURSE RETAIN OPTION OF AGAIN CURTAILING ASSISTANCE IF WE ARE CONVINCED SUBSEQUENTLY THAT GOP IS NEVERTHELESS MOVING TOWARD PROLIFERATION.  
HUMMEL

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## Message Attributes

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